

For immediate release

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Department of Economic Development approves \$2.1 million for youth programs

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. -- The Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED) has announced the approval of more than \$2.1 million in tax credits aimed at increasing educational opportunities and decreasing crime in Missouri.

Twenty-one projects in 11 Missouri communities were recently approved through the DED Youth Opportunities Program (YOP). A total of 36 projects have been approved during the current calendar year. Through the program, private sector donors who contribute to an approved project will receive a credit equivalent to 50 percent of their donation. The credits can then be applied directly to the donor's Missouri tax bill. The credits, in effect, allow donors to redirect their tax dollars to local projects and serve as an important fundraising tool for charitable organizations.

"The Youth Opportunities Program is a wonderful way to prompt our youth to complete their education and become more involved in community activities," said Joseph L. Driskill, DED director. "By increasing educational opportunities for at-risk youth and decreasing juvenile violence, the Youth Opportunities Program also provides a wonderful opportunity for businesses to get a return on their investment in Missouri's future -- our youth."

YOP focuses on three main program outcomes, which tie directly into Governor Carnahan's Show-Me Results, including increasing the percentage of 25 year olds with a high school diploma, increasing the percent of students annually that complete high school, and decreasing the number of violent crimes per 100,000 Missourians. Many of the approved projects anticipate positive results in one or more of the outcome areas.

YOP was developed in 1995 under the Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention Act. Administered by DED, the program focuses on expanding opportunities for youth through community participation and activities that discourage criminal and violent behavior. Since the program came into effect, the department has approved more than 184 applications totaling over \$16.4 million in tax credits for youth projects statewide.

For more information on these projects, contact the Youth Opportunities Program at (573) 751-4539 or on the Internet at www.ecodev.state.mo.us/yop.

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Youth Opportunities Program recipients for 2000

City	Recipient	Program Type	Credits received
Cape Girardeau	Southeast Missouri Private Industry Council	Job training/mentoring	\$40,000.00
Columbia	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Boone County	Mentoring	\$106,490.00
Columbia	Rainbow House	Violence prevention	\$124,573.00
Columbia	Comprehensive Human Service Inc/The Front Door	Counseling	\$38,000.00

Hannibal	CHART Teen Task Force	Adopt-A-School	\$10,000.00
Hannibal	YMCA of Hannibal	Youth Activity Center	\$42,400.00
Kansas City	DeLaSalle Education Center	Degree completion	\$250,000.00
Kansas City	Platte County Economic Development Council	Job training	\$31,045.00
Kingdom City	Missouri Girls Town Foundation Inc.	Counseling	\$87,500.00
Kirkwood	Educare Learning Center, Inc.	Youth Activity Center	\$152,500.00
Naylor	Naylor R-II School	Degree completion	\$19,750.00
Peculiar	Raymore-Peculiar School Foundation	Internship	\$64,000.00
Poplar Bluff	Butler County Community Resource Council	Job Training	\$119,450.00
Springfield	Springfield Community Center	Violence prevention	\$47,479.00
St. Louis	Center of Contemporary Arts	Youth Activity Center	\$166,500.00
St. Louis	Children's Foundation of Mid-America	Violence prevention	\$124,222.00
St. Louis	Epworth Children and Family Services	Counseling	\$150,000.00
St. Louis	Housing Authority of St. Louis County	Internship	\$123,000.00
St. Louis	Legal Services of Eastern Missouri	Counseling	\$106,490.00
St. Louis	Lutheran Family and Children's Services	Mentoring/Counseling	\$125,000.00
St. Louis	St. Patrick Center	Job training	\$250,000.00